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DATE: March 1, 2001

SUBJECT: **COMMUNITY SUPPORTS PLAN TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS IN THE REGION OF PEEL**

FROM: Keith Ward, Commissioner of Housing and Property  
and General Manager, Peel Living  
Paul Vezina, Commissioner of Social Services  
Peter Graham, Commissioner of Health

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Regional Council approve the Community Supports Plan, formatted to meet Federal requirements for future Region of Peel applications under the Federal Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative, to address homelessness in the Region of Peel;**

**And further, that Council endorse submission of the Community Supports Plan to Human Resources and Development Canada;**

**And further, that this report be forwarded to all area M.P.P.s and M.P.s.**

### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- Though the SCPI initiative does not fund permanent housing, increased affordable supply is identified as required in Peel
- Funding priorities under SCPI identified as outreach, youth transitional housing and family housing options
- Peel's Community Supports Plan identifies existing service gaps and barriers

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Background**

In December 1999, the Federal government announced a program designed to invest \$753 million across Canada to alleviate and prevent homelessness. Of this total program funding, \$305 million was made available through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI). The Initiative is designed to help communities develop local solutions to homelessness and implement support networks to assist those at-risk of homelessness. It should be noted that the intent of funding under the SCPI program is to provide supportive housing. No permanent housing projects will be considered for SCPI funding. The SCPI initiative is only a three year program.

Staff has worked closely with Human Resources and Development Canada, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Homelessness Secretariat in Ottawa to

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ensure that Peel can access SCPI funding. Staff also continued to work with community partners to document community trends and needs regarding the joint issues of rising poverty and growing homelessness in the Region. As a result of extensive consultation and consensus building, a Community Supports Plan to Address Homelessness in the Region of Peel has been prepared.

### **2. Report Overview**

It is important to recognize that the development of a Continuum of Supports Approach proved to be a valuable strategic planning tool in determining priority and links among Peel's housing and homeless initiatives. In preparation for Federal and Provincial funding applications, staff developed a Continuum of Supports Plan for Peel in consultation with community stakeholders. The purpose of the Continuum of Supports Plan is to develop comprehensive strategies for the delivery and co-ordination of homeless initiatives, based on the diversity of people who are homeless and those who are at risk. Staff has since learned that a Continuum of Supports Plan, developed through community consensus, has been made a prerequisite for Federal homelessness program funding.

The Continuum of Supports Plan provided the foundation for the development of a Community Plan to Address Homelessness in the Region of Peel. Community members performed a key role in the development of the Plan, as well as to co-ordinate research and discussions, including coming to consensus on priority areas. The Community Supports Plan, attached as Appendix I, is formatted to coincide with federal funding under the Federal Government's Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative. The Federal government is seeking Council's approval of the Plan as a prerequisite to receiving up to \$2.9 million for homelessness initiatives over the next three years.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Federal Supporting Communities Partnership Initiatives program guidelines require 50% matching contributions from municipal or provincial sources, broadly related to homeless initiatives and not necessarily project by project based. Presently, staff are or will be expending approved budgets that vastly exceed the necessary municipal share. Through strategic project planning no foreseeable Regional costs (save for land contributions) are anticipated.

### **BEYOND 2000: DIRECTIONS FOR PEEL'S FUTURE**

This report is consistent with Goal 3, to "be a strong effective regional government", in the Region's strategic plan, *Beyond 2000: Directions for Peel's Future*. This report is also consistent with Strategic Direction 5.4, to "act as a leader and advocate on issues of Regional concern".

### **CONCLUSION**

Consensus building within the Peel Community has proved extremely effective. The Community Supports Plan provides a long-term comprehensive focus that assesses the full range of needs of people who are homeless or at-risk. Without community involvement in the

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development of the Plan, the needs of the populations both homeless and at-risk would not be adequately reflected.

Following endorsement of the Community Supports Plan by Regional Council, the Plan will be forwarded to Human Resources Development Canada. Funding for projects designated as priority areas under SCPI is anticipated in early 2001. Specific projects will be brought before Council for any approvals required.

Keith Ward  
Commissioner of Housing and Property  
and General Manager, Peel Living

Paul Y. Vezina  
Commissioner, Social Services

Peter H.Graham  
Commissioner of Health

**Approved for Submission:**

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R. Maloney, Chief Administrative Officer

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c. Legislative Services

Attach.